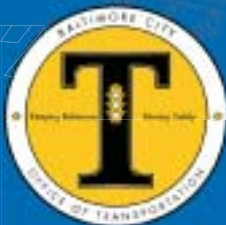


TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN

KEEPING BALTIMORE MOVING SAFELY

Now and in the Future



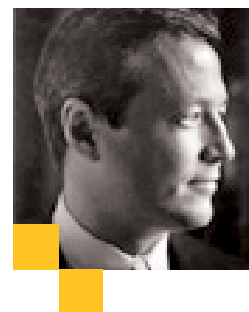
Baltimore City Department of Transportation
March 2003







Letter from Mayor Martin O'Malley



Each year the Baltimore metropolitan area produces \$100 billion in goods and products, half of Maryland's total.

People are investing in Baltimore's housing stock, bringing new vitality to its neighborhoods. We have also seen Baltimore's traditional industrial sites transformed into office spaces, retail establishments, and loft apartments. People are discovering that Baltimore is a desirable and affordable place to work and visit.

Good transportation is one of the keys to attracting new jobs, ensuring the health of neighborhoods and maintaining a high quality of life. To continue Baltimore's growth, we must ensure the city is accessible to both citizens and visitors. Last year, we created the Department of Transportation to specifically address the access and mobility needs of the city. Led by Director Alfred H. Foxx, the Department of Transportation has made significant progress towards maintaining the transportation system and implementing improvements.

To craft a transportation system that will meet both our current and future needs, the Department of Transportation has developed an ambitious yet achievable vision. This strategic plan provides the foundation from which the City of Baltimore shall articulate and achieve its vision for better mobility. An important element of the plan is a detailed set of strategies and actions that will improve the performance of the City's transportation system.

I am pleased to share this Strategic Plan with you to show how we plan to keep Baltimore moving in a safe and efficient manner.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin O'Malley".

Martin O'Malley
Mayor, Baltimore City



Letter from Director Alfred H. Foxx



Transportation plays a vital role in every aspect of life in Baltimore City and the region. It determines how our citizens get to work, how our businesses get their goods to market, and how services are provided for Baltimore's residents. It also plays a large part in the quality of life in Baltimore's neighborhood, providing sidewalks and crosswalks for our children; parking, roads, and alleys for our homes; and transit which provides connections to shops, schools, and attractions throughout our region.

The Department of Transportation is dedicated to making sure transportation in the City of Baltimore meets all of these needs in a safe, consistent and efficient manner. Because the elements of the transportation system are as varied as the people and goods they are designed to serve, we created this multi-faceted strategic plan to ensure Baltimore has an integrated network which the region can be proud of.

In this plan, we have established goals and objectives which address every aspect of transportation and define in specific terms where our transportation system needs to be in 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. To make the vision a reality, the plan includes a broad range of actions which will affect everything from how quickly we fix a pothole to how soon we can develop and implement transit improvements throughout the city.

The Department of Transportation will be working with Baltimore's citizens, businesses, State and Federal agencies to implement the strategies and actions included in the plan. As we carry out our mission, we shall continue to use the plan to guide our decisions and ensure that transportation projects, programs, and policies are meeting the needs of the city and its people. On behalf of our Office, I am proud to join Mayor O'Malley in presenting this Strategic Plan.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alfred H. Foxx".

Alfred H. Foxx
Director, Baltimore City Department of Transportation







E. Sachse, & Co.'s bird's eye view of the city of Baltimore, 1869. U.S. Library of Congress.

Aging Infrastructure:

Hanover Street Bridge: 1900

Wilkins Avenue Bridge: 1900

Howard Street Tunnel: 1895

Camden Station: 1840

No major highways built since 1980's...



Heritage of the Past, Challenges of the Present

When you look at Baltimore, you look at the history of transportation in America. This is the city where the first steamships sailed. This is the city where the railroads began their trek across the country. This is the place where countless immigrants ended their journey across the seas to become citizens of the United States and residents of Baltimore.

From the very beginning, Baltimore was at the vanguard of transportation innovation, using road, rail, and water connections to make it one of the great American cities and the only metropolitan area in the State of Maryland. Today, the roads, railroads, and waterways of Baltimore's past continue to serve the city and the metropolitan area. Presently, the transportation system of Baltimore is comprised of:

- Approximately 2,000 miles of streets and highways
- Nearly 300 bridges and culverts
- 3,600 miles of sidewalk, curbing, and gutters
- 450 miles of alleys
- 1,300 signalized intersections and over 250,000 traffic and informational signs
- More than 48,000 off-street parking spaces
- A multimodal (albeit disconnected and incomplete) transit network including: bus, light rail, subway, commuter rail, and water taxis
- 2 toll tunnels and one toll bridge
- 14 shipping terminals comprising the Port of Baltimore
- 225 miles of railroad





Challenges for the Future

Unfortunately, the innovations that brought Baltimore into the 20th Century are starting to show their age under the pressures of 21st Century transportation needs. The centuries-old streets of the city have not held up as well under automobiles as they did under horse-drawn carriages. The regional connections that give Baltimore its prominence in the state are now drawing in more commuters, freight, and travelers than the local streets can support. The city has been fortunate to preserve much of its heritage, fighting off highway expansions to preserve its historic streets and maintaining the railroads that have served the city's residents and industries for so long.

However, retaining the heritage and charm of this classic city has created some of its greatest transportation challenges. The narrow lanes that give so many neighborhoods their character and intimacy limit our ability to expand roadways and transit lines to handle more travelers. The rows of 15-foot houses do not leave enough space for every family to park their 20-foot vehicle out front. The historic port now boasts 15% of the East Coast's port trade but needs modern landside transportation to remain competitive.

Baltimore has also lost much of the transit network it had in the early 20th Century. The streetcar system that stretched from Towson to Ellicott City is gone, and the buses that replaced it lack the reliability and effectiveness of the old system. The city saw the return of rail with the advent of the Central Light Rail Line and the subway, but these systems do not connect to one another, nor do they operate in enough corridors to serve the majority of Baltimore's citizens.

In addition to these challenges unique to Baltimore, the city faces many of the same transportation issues of other American cities:

- The population migration to the suburbs;
- The increasing dependence of households on the automobile; and
- Insufficient transportation funding.





Urban Mobility Report:

*Between 1982 and 2000 rush hour trips traveling
in congestion almost tripled in number.*

In 2000 the Annual
Cost of Congestion:
\$395 per person
16th highest in the country

*These numbers can only be expected to
grow unless Baltimore takes action.*

Baltimore City
has ***2,000 miles***
of streets, alleys and highways.





The Future of Transportation: Historic Foundations, Modern Systems

The demands on Baltimore's transportation are only expected to grow with its success. Within the next five years, new development in Baltimore will result in:

- Over 7 million square feet of office space
- 2 million square feet of retail space
- 4,600 housing units
- 2,700 hotel rooms
- Nearly 30,000 new jobs

According to the 2002 *Urban Mobility Report* in 2000, congestion cost city residents, employees, and visitors over \$860 million in fuel spent and time lost in stalled traffic. Projections developed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council indicate that congestion will steadily increase on major roadways such as I-83 and I-95 over the next 20 years.

If Baltimore is to sustain its success, it will need to build upon its transportation heritage to meet its current and future transportation needs. The old sidewalks served dense and mixed land uses long before Smart Growth was ever defined as a concept; they need only to be repaired and maintained to serve their purpose. The railroads and ports on which the city were built need to be connected with modern freight facilities and improved highway connections. The Baltimore Region Rail System Plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with other transit improvements to once again provide an effective transit network that covers the entire city.

Baltimore also needs to reclaim its role as a transportation innovator. As the B&O Railroad did in the 1840s, the Baltimore-Washington Maglev can show the world how new transit technologies can revolutionize our economy. By embracing innovations in Intelligent Transportation Systems, the city can introduce new technologies into existing roadways to improve the overall flow of traffic. These modern technologies can be integrated into planning, construction, and maintenance activities to build a system that reflects the needs and desires of Baltimore's residents, employers, and visitors.

The City of Baltimore Department of Transportation will take the lead in making sure that the entire system is working as it should. The Strategic Plan will provide the framework for addressing current transportation challenges and providing the solutions necessary to keep Baltimore moving into the future.





CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Baltimore transportation system is one of the primary driving forces behind the viability of the city. The Mayor's vision of a prosperous and diverse Baltimore is achieved through enhanced access and mobility. Such activities will not only benefit existing residents and businesses, but help to refocus growth in the core of the region and attract new residents and businesses to the city.

The Department of Transportation is tasked with ensuring that the transportation system is capable of providing for safe and efficient movement within the city, and between the city and the rest of the region. To accomplish this mission, the Department of Transportation is responsible for establishing a comprehensive vision for the system, gaining support for the vision, developing actionable strategies and programs for realizing the vision, and securing resources to implement them. Within the strategic framework, some of the everyday charges the Department is directly responsible for are:

- Improving the City's roads, bridges, and sidewalks with an ongoing program of construction and maintenance activities;
- Enhancing mobility by monitoring and controlling traffic flow and responding with timely solutions when incidents occur;
- Implementing improvements to the City's street lighting;
- Keeping the City's roadways clear and safe during winter weather events;
- Providing up-to-date traffic and informational signs;
- Representing the City's interests in mass transit, trails, and greenways;
- Improving and expanding the underground conduit system;
- Directing pedestrian and vehicle traffic and enforcing parking regulations;
- Enhancing safety through the installation and operation of red light cameras throughout the City;
- Regulating the location of bus stops and transit stations; and,
- Improving parking conditions and maintaining the quality of life in neighborhoods by removing, storing, and disposing of abandoned vehicles.





MISSION:

The *Department of Transportation* provides
the *City of Baltimore* with
a comprehensive and modern
transportation system
that *integrates all modes* of travel and
provides *mobility* and *accessibility*
in a *convenient, safe* and
cost-effective manner.





DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN

The key component in the Department of Transportation's efforts to establish a first-class transportation system for Baltimore is this Strategic Plan. In this plan, the Department states its mission and overall vision, identifies immediate and long-term goals, and creates a framework for turning its vision into a reality.

The Department of Transportation recognizes that the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan is dependent on feedback and support from the local and regional entities who represent those whom will be most affected by it, the people of the Baltimore. To develop this support, the Department worked with representatives from the city agencies, and public and private entities.

Incorporating input from these partners, the Department of Transportation crafted the following **Vision Statement**:

The City of Baltimore's transportation system will be a first class, integrated, multi-modal system that forms the foundation for the livability, continued growth and economic development in the city.

Also with input from their partners, eight goals and objectives were established that describe how the Department of Transportation will achieve this vision. These goals are strongly interrelated and form the basis for how the City will put the Strategic Plan into effect.



GOAL 1:

Develop a *world-class* transit system
capable of *connecting* the
communities of Baltimore
to *one another* and to the *region*.





Baltimore is built for transit. The majority of the city was built during a time when streetcars and railroads plied the streets, making it possible to sustain the compact neighborhoods and towering skyline we see around us. Today, transit can again help meet a demand which exceeds Baltimore's parking supply and road capacity. By expanding the rail lines and improving the structure of the bus network, Baltimore will be able to handle the crowds of people coming to this city to live, work, and play.

Objectives:

- Optimized transit system.
- Increased usage of transit system to alleviate need for additional roadway and parking capacity.
- Improved transportation capacity without detracting from communities and corridors served.

Example Strategies:

Upgrade existing transit network.

Actions:

- Perform a comprehensive transit "needs" analysis with both an existing and future system focus.
- Do a comprehensive transit/traffic operations analysis to determine improvements to signal and roadway systems to increase transit speed and reliability.
- Improve integration and coordination between services to reduce time, and inconvenience of transfers.

Expand system of premium services (light rail, subway, bus rapid transit, Maglev) connecting all major activity centers in the city to the region.

Actions:

- Evaluate proposed Regional Rail Red and Green Lines and other regional transit's effect on existing transportation systems and other future systems.
- Advocate the development and implementation of the Baltimore-Washington Maglev System.

Simplify the use of transit system to encourage ridership.

Actions:

- Develop "family of services" for bus network to target specific travel markets (e.g., express, local, circulators).
- Work in conjunction with transit providers to develop a coherent, unified system identity.





GOAL 2:

Modernize the transportation system to meet the future needs of Baltimore.



Baltimore is fortunate to have an extensive transportation network that covers all areas of the city. To get the most out of this system, its infrastructure must be rejuvenated. In many cases, this means restoring and maintaining the roads, sidewalks, and other facilities already in place to ensure they serve the city. In other instances, renewing the system means taking advantage of modern techniques and technologies to provide an updated and optimized transportation network for the city.

Objectives:

- Improved condition of infrastructure.
- Lower direct and indirect costs associated with maintenance backlog.
- Incorporate modern technologies throughout the existing system.

Example Strategy:

Upgrade and improve the system through preventative maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement as necessary.

Actions:

- Establish a rational capital asset management approach to assess and prioritize needs of existing infrastructure.
- Develop an on-going, comprehensive, preventative maintenance program to preserve infrastructure.
- Evaluate the application of new technologies for the above activities.





GOAL 3:

Provide *access* and *mobility* for
people and *goods* throughout
Baltimore and its surroundings.



Moving goods and people is the purpose of the city's transportation system. Ample access is necessary for efficient mobility.

Furthermore, improved mobility must mean all modes of travel are integrated. The different modes -- road, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian -- must be developed to connect to and complement one another and to provide a comprehensive and user-friendly system.

Objectives:

- Better mobility and accessibility for walking and bicycling.
- Better regional access to neighborhoods and activity centers in Baltimore.
- Reduced travel times and travel costs for city residents, employers, visitors, and goods.
- Extensive coverage and quality of transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks to reduce need for automobile travel.
- Better integration of the transportation system.

Example Strategy:

Optimize the entire transportation system, not just parts of it.

Actions:

- Lead the effort to identify areas of Baltimore needing improved transit services and transit stations.
- Enhance the timing and coordination of traffic lights to handle everyday traffic as well as special events.
- Include improvements for pedestrians (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.) in new road projects.
- Incorporate bicycle-friendly elements in all reconstruction and new construction.
- Insure that Baltimore's transportation planning and budgeting processes cover all elements of the system.



GOAL 4:

Ensure *optimum safety* and
security throughout the *entire*
transportation system.





Baltimore's transportation system must provide for the personal safety and security of its users. People are often reluctant to visit the city or travel other than by car due to a perceived vulnerability to crime. Addressing these concerns with appropriate transportation improvements will enhance mobility while promoting the livability of Baltimore.

Transportation also serves a supporting role in the overall security of Baltimore, providing law enforcement and emergency response teams with the mobility they need to respond to incidents. Safe and secure transportation also provides mobility during natural and man-made disasters.

Objectives:

- Improved public perception of the security of transportation in Baltimore.
- Reduced number of transportation-related crimes and incidents.
- Shortened response times of emergency services.

Example Strategies:

Enhance transportation systems and services to reduce threats or perceived threats to personal security.

Actions:

- Improve street lighting in high crime areas and key transit stops and stations.
- Increase presence of security officers in key locations.

Target infrastructure and operations improvements to reduce number and severity of accidents.

Actions:

- Improve road geometry and upgrade traffic signal systems to reduce automobile accidents.
- Improve sidewalks and crosswalks along streets, highways, and transit corridors.

Continue to work with the Baltimore City Police Department on transportation issues related to crime, safety, and emergency management.





GOAL 5:

Support the *economic development* of Baltimore as an *employment center* and as a desirable place to *live*.



Baltimore is currently going through a period of revitalization. Over the last several years, there has been renewed interest in residential, office, and retail development in the city, especially in Federal Hill, Inner Harbor East, Fells Point, Canton, and the west side of downtown. People are coming to the city to live, work, and do business. An efficient, modern, and attractive transportation system is essential to preserving and improving the livability and economic vitality of the city.

Objectives:

- Increased attractiveness of transportation corridors.
- Improved access to businesses.
- Better transportation options for all ages.
- Reduced travel time for shipping/delivery of goods.
- Improved visitor and tourist access to attractions.

Example Strategies:

Partner with neighborhoods to develop and implement transportation plans that address neighborhood mobility needs.

Actions:

- Designate “ombudsmen” to work with neighborhoods on transportation-related issues.
- Develop streetscapes to increase the walkability and attractiveness of neighborhood business districts.

Improve mobility for youth, elderly, and disabled residents in neighborhoods.

Action:

- Ensure neighborhood residents can walk to nearby parks, schools, hospitals, and medical facilities.

Improve efficiency of goods shipping and delivery for city businesses and the Port of Baltimore.

Action:

- Target infrastructure improvements to clear distribution bottlenecks.

Develop programs in conjunction with major employers, tourist venues, and neighborhood business districts to determine and address access needs for customers, visitors, and tourists.

Actions:

- Survey Baltimore customers and visitors to determine their transportation needs.
- Develop and market a way-finding system to make the city more accessible to visitors.



GOAL 6:

Support the *sustainable development* of the region and the *preservation* of Baltimore's *cultural, social, and natural resources*.





Sustainable development, or Smart Growth, seeks to balance economic development with an area's quality of life. As a classic East Coast city, Baltimore already includes many elements that support sustainable development: an extensive sidewalk network and dense development. Transportation can enhance the sustainability of the city by offering more travel choices (walking, cycling, transit), by helping to improve air quality, and by ensuring improvements are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Objectives:

- Balanced transportation and land use.
- Reduced transportation impacts on natural, cultural, and social resources.
- Improved appearance and cleanliness of transportation system.
- Increased use of non-motorized transportation.
- Improved air quality.

Example Strategies:

Develop and implement cleaning and beautification program.

Actions:

- Implement an "Adopt-a-Street/Adopt-a-Highway" program.
- Work with citizens to reduce the visual and aesthetic impacts of existing transportation infrastructure.
- Work with historic preservation groups to establish design guidelines for fitting modern transportation improvements into historic areas.

Increase availability and use of environmentally friendly transportation alternatives.

Actions:

- Provide more routes for pedestrian and bicycle users.
- Look for opportunities to introduce alternatively fueled vehicles to the City of Baltimore's fleet.





GOAL 7:

Improve the *quality* and *quantity* of
information communicated among
all regional transportation stakeholders.



Transportation is about decisions, whether the issue is where to build a new rail line or how a person is going to get to work. To make informed decisions, transportation planners, operators, and users all need access to accurate, up-to-date information. Expanding the use of communication tools such as variable message signs, traveler radio channels, and the Internet will improve mobility, making them aware of travel conditions and alternative routes. Dialogues among the Department of Transportation, regional policy makers, and Baltimore's citizens will ensure all parties have the information they need to decide the role of transportation in our community.

Objectives:

- Informed transportation users, operators, and providers.
- Open communication between all parties.
- Targeted information to intended audience.

Example Strategies:

Ensure citizens and policy makers have access to information and ability to provide input.

Actions:

- Assign City planner to work at the MTA to keep City apprised of all relevant transit issues.
- Establish a Mayor's Transportation Coordination Board to discuss transportation issues and set priorities for transportation projects and services in the City of Baltimore.
- Regularly evaluate transportation performance and publish results.
- Conduct regular media briefings and issue press releases.

Ensure that all issues receive appropriate attention and follow-through.

Action:

- Augment tracking program to document responses provided and actions taken on both short- and long-term issues.



GOAL 8:

Establish a sound and adequate
funding base for transportation
operations, maintenance,
and investment.





Disruptions or fluctuations in funding make it difficult to implement and sustain long-term transportation solutions. New funding sources are also crucial for the planning and implementation of new facilities and services in the city. To maintain Baltimore's transportation network and invest in its future, the City of Baltimore must actively seek out new sources of public and private revenue.

Objectives:

- Sufficient funds to meet needs on a timely basis.
- Shared costs of providing transportation distributed among transportation users and providers.
- Stable funds for ongoing maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement needs.

Example Strategies:

Explore all new potential funding and financing sources in detail.

Action:

- Evaluate the potential sources, develop a strategy, and then implement an action plan to increase the City's transportation share of gas tax, new grants, and revenue collection from parking, traffic violations, and permits.

Establish ongoing, consensus-driven process for making estimates of all transportation-related funding needs.

Actions:

- Perform periodic comprehensive needs studies.
- Develop and enforce open process for establishing the City Capital Improvement Program.

Establish and maintain ongoing evaluation of transportation's financial environment in terms of sources and uses of funds.

Action:

- Perform comprehensive review and continuously update all existing and potential sources of funds.





IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

The goals of this Strategic Plan link the City's vision for transportation to the activities necessary to fulfill it. To make the City's transportation vision a reality, the goals must be pursued through a detailed set of strategies and actions, each of which must then be carried out through the Department of Transportation's projects, operations, and policies.

The Department of Transportation worked with its partners to develop a comprehensive list of strategies and actions that are:

- Effective in meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan,
- Consistent with the priorities of the City, and
- Cost-effective to implement and maintain.

Implementation will yield results quickly, with the best improvements first.

The Department of Transportation is now working to implement the priority actions developed through this Strategic Plan. It is working with other agencies in the city and with transportation partners throughout the region to assign specific tasks to the people capable of making the plan a reality.







NEXT STEPS

The Department of Transportation has reviewed the current Capital Improvements Plan and identified those existing projects which tie into the actions, strategies, and goals articulated in the Strategic Transportation Plan. The Department of Transportation has also identified new projects which can be carried out as part of its Two- and Five-Year Programs. These programs will be published together with the Strategic Transportation Plan and will illustrate the relationship between the City's current activities and its long range transportation goals.

The next step for the Department of Transportation is to formulate longer range programs through which to implement the Strategic Plan. Ten-, 15-, and 20-year plans are being developed to guide long-range planning efforts.

As the Department of Transportation executes its mission, it will return to the Strategic Plan to measure its progress towards achieving the transportation goals for Baltimore. By continually reviewing and updating its goals, strategies and actions, the Department of Transportation will be able to keep Baltimore moving safely both now and in the future.







DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

417 East Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Phone: 410-396.6802

Fax: 410-547.1036

